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WOOD BRICK STRIP PANELING--A NEW WAY TO DECORATE

To help diversify paneling designs for home and office decoration, we have produced a versatile and distinctive wood brick strip paneling. This design incorporates a brick effect with the beauty and warmth of our native hardwoods. Wood brick strip paneling is tongue-and-grooved, like strip flooring, for rapid installation with nails. The brick effect is created by chamfering the edges of the strips and cross-grooving the strip face at regular intervals. The chamfers and cross-grooves simulate the mortar, and the flat surface the face of the "brick" (fig. 1).

The paneling can be nailed over existing wall surfaces or directly to studding. With the addition of furring strips, it also can be installed on concrete or cement-block walls. However, wood brick strip paneling is not limited to use on walls. It can decorate cabinet fronts, planters, doors, stair risers, room dividers, and the backs of built-in bookcases; and it makes an excellent area of emphasis over and around fireplaces or on the back wall between the counter tops and cabinets in kitchens. Such projects are just the thing for do-it-yourselfers.

Many effects are possible by using different woods and finishes (fig. 2). Different species of hardwoods can be used to obtain a variety of natural colors, or the paneling can be stained to match, contrast, or blend with other room furnishings. Unique effects also can be created by changing the pattern of installation or varying the size of the brick (fig. 3). We have found that most people favor a 2 1/4- by 16-inch brick pattern over shorter or narrower bricks. Moreover, the 16-inch, multiple brick face is convenient for nailed application to studs or furring on 16-inch centers.

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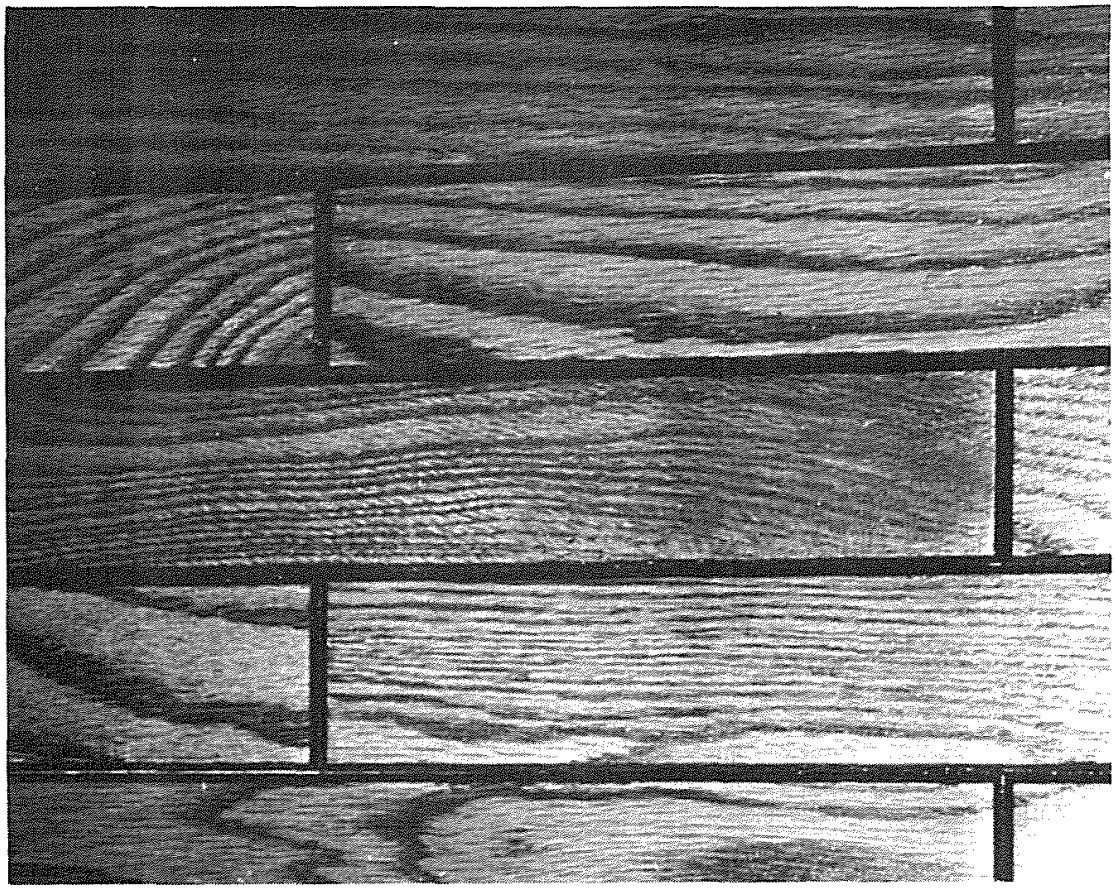

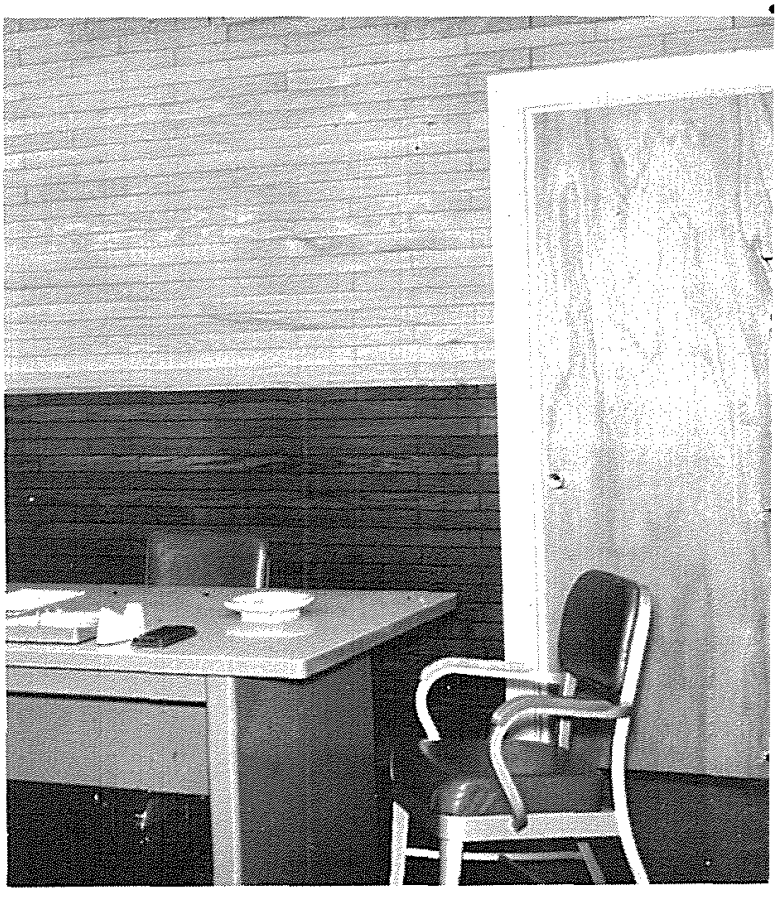

FIGURE 2.--Sycamore brick strip paneling with a clear finish on top portion of wall and dark-stained, red oak strips on the bottom part.

1.--(Left) Wood brick strip paneling with edge-chamfers
:ross-grooves to simulate mortar and set off the "brick
s"

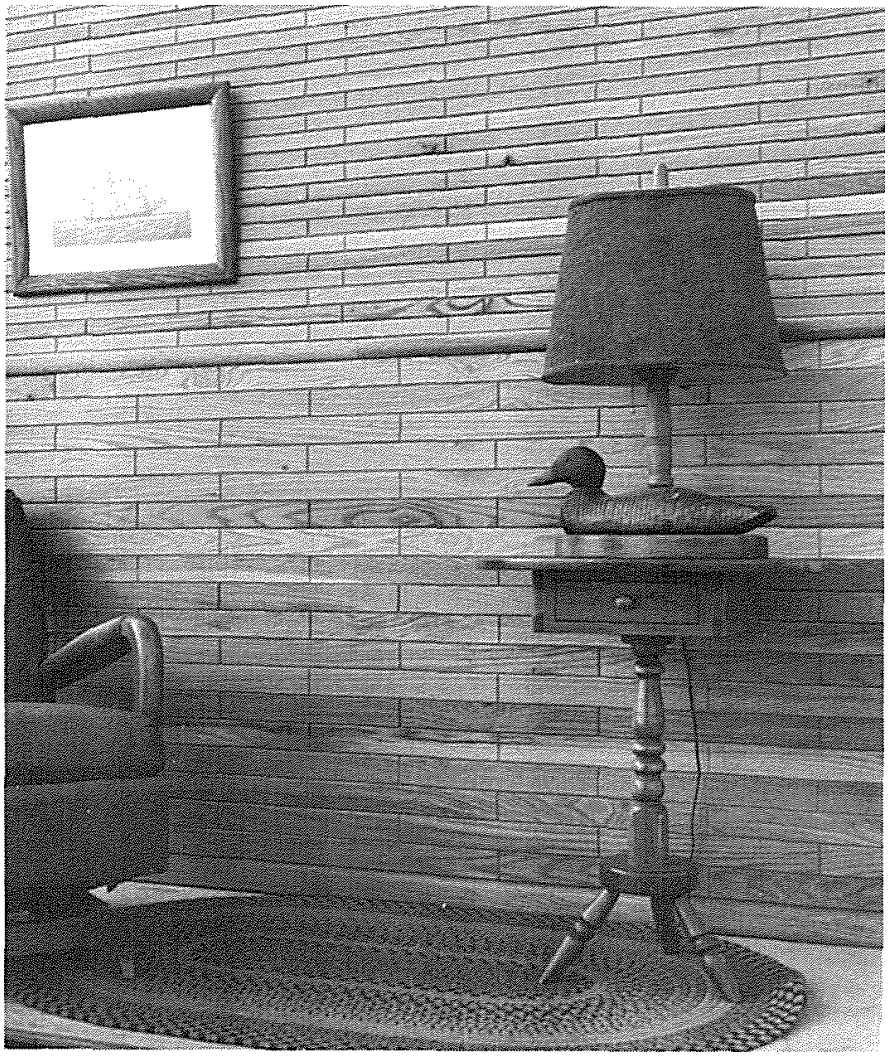

FIGURE 3.--Smaller bricks on the upper wall are lapped a quarter of their length. Larger bricks below are in the conventional half-lap arrangement. Both are red oak with a natural finish.

Wood brick paneling can be made from kiln-dried hardwoods in any well-equipped woodworking shop. Our experience indicates that it can be produced economically from No. 2 and No. 3A Common lumber. We got 63 and 57 percent yields of paneling from No. 2 and No. 3A Common oak lumber, respectively. Also, because it can be made from short, narrow strips, the paneling may be a means of utilizing waste from plants now making other wood products.

Strip paneling can be made in 3/8- or 1/2-inch thicknesses, and in lengths that are multiples of the cross-groove spacing used on the strips. Inasmuch as these thicknesses are also normal for strip flooring, strip paneling could be produced by flooring manufacturers with little difficulty. Actually, the only difference between the faces of strip paneling and strip flooring is that the face of the paneling has a chamfer along the edges and a "V" groove at brick-length intervals. Therefore, a plant manufacturing strip flooring could produce strip paneling by edge-chamfering and cross-grooving the face of their product. This would require only a small investment in additional equipment and little increase in production costs.

We have found that an edge-chamfer at a 45-degree angle and with faces 3/16 to 1/4 inch wide is satisfactory. The V-groove angle and faces should match the edge-chamfer. The spacing between the V-grooves can be any length that blends well with the width of the strip.

Strip paneling could be sold prefinished as strip flooring frequently is. It can include sound defects to add character or accent marks. Thus, material not qualifying for flooring could be marketed as paneling. It is also possible to produce more than one grade of paneling, each grade differing in the number and size of defects.

As another way of attaining the brick-and-mortar effect, we are investigating the use of small, thin pieces of wood--wood brick tile--for application with an adhesive. This work will be reported soon.

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